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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. SUH (Vice-Chairman)	(Republic of Korea)
later:	Mr. ELARABY (Chairman)	(Egypt)
later:	Mr. PATOKALLIO (Vice-Chairman)	(Finland)

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In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Suh (Republic of Korea), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 to 65, 68 and 142; and 67 and 69 (continued)
GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. von ARX (Switzerland) (interpretation from French): First of all, I wish to congratulate Mr. Elaraby and the other officers of the Committee on their election.

In the past few years, important gains have been made in negotiations in the field of disarmament. The balance sheet of last year's negotiations has once again been positive. Bilateral and regional disarmament agreements of considerable scope have been concluded, and the Conference on Disarmament was able, after years of effort, to finalize a draft Convention on the total prohibition of chemical weapons.

(Mr. von Arx, Switzerland)

The implementation of all these instruments will be one of the important tasks of the coming years. First, we shall have to make sure that all States concerned adhere to these agreements and comply fully with their obligations. Secondly, all necessary means will have to be provided to make possible the scheduled destruction of weapons, taking the essential precautions to protect people and the environment.

I should like to say a few words on one of this year's greatest achievements in the field of disarmament, which is of course the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Deployment, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. Switzerland neither possesses nor has the intention to acquire chemical weapons and is therefore pleased with the consensus achieved on the draft Convention. We should like to commend the Conference on Disarmament, its Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and, in particular, the Ad Hoc Committee's Chairman, Ambassador Ritter von Wagner, on this great success.

This draft Convention is an important breakthrough, even if it is not perfect in all respects. For instance, my country would have preferred that the verification measures, in particular those concerning challenge inspections, be less complicated and more binding. The text of the draft Convention is indeed very ambitious and its many technical details may prove difficult to implement. If future progress is to be achieved in the field of multilateral disarmament - in particular by the creation of an effective verification system for the Convention on the prohibition of biological weapons and of a system of challenge inspections for the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty - it will be better to concentrate more on the substance and to leave the preparation of practical measures to the international control organizations.

(Mr. von Arx, Switzerland)

Although Switzerland could not participate in the negotiations of the Conference on Disarmament, it committed itself, in 1990, in the Charter of Paris of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) to being one of the original States signatories of the Convention on chemical weapons. This pledge has been reaffirmed in the 1992 Helsinki Document and reflects our conviction that this Convention can achieve its goals only if all States that possess chemical weapons or have the industrial and technical means to produce them adhere to it. In this respect, I hope that all States Members of the United Nations will honour the efforts of the Conference on Disarmament by signing the Convention at the Paris signatory conference in mid-January next year. We welcome the current efforts in the First Committee to prepare a draft resolution that will ensure that the largest possible number of Member States participate in the signatory conference and that all signatory States ratify the Convention without delay.

Switzerland has always aspired to participate, within its means and possibilities, in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. Thus, we were glad to witness and benefit from the gradual improvement in the observer status over the past few years. The present restricted membership of the Conference on Disarmament is the result of the historical development of the Conference and also of the concern for efficiency in the negotiations.

However, the end of the cold war and in particular the finalizing of the Convention on chemical weapons have given impetus to the reopening of the debate on the composition of the Conference on Disarmament. In this context I should like to recall that Switzerland has applied for full membership. It is obvious that the question of the composition of the Conference is closely linked to its future agenda. However, like other delegations that have

(Mr. von Arx, Switzerland)

addressed this question, the Swiss delegation considers that it would be desirable for the Conference to open up to all interested States applying for membership. A solution should be actively sought so that a decision can be taken next year. The time has come for a frank and penetrating discussion between all interested States about the role of multilateral disarmament in the years to come. Allow me to add that my country will spare no effort to maintain Geneva's traditional role as host for international conferences and negotiations.

As I have said before, the Convention on chemical weapons brings an important additional element to the international norms related to the control of weapons of mass destruction. Besides implementing this Convention over the next few years, we shall have to re-examine one of the first international systems of non-proliferation: the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), signed in 1968. In 1995, 25 years after its entry into force, a conference will take place to decide whether this Treaty will remain in force indefinitely or be prolonged for a specific period. My Government is deeply committed to the maintenance and strengthening of the NPT and will decide on the period of prolongation of the Treaty at the appropriate time.

The following factors will be decisive in regard to the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime: first, the satisfactory implementation of the Treaty and the achievement of its universality, which has recently been considerably strengthened; secondly, the progress of efforts to reduce the number of nuclear weapons to the lowest possible level; thirdly, the progress towards a complete ban on nuclear tests; fourthly, the improvement of negative

(Mr. von Arx, Switzerland)

security guarantees; and, finally, the strengthening of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) non-proliferation safeguard system. The IAEA verification procedures must be reinforced in order to prevent cases such as that of Iraq, by a rationalization of means that will avoid excessive costs for the international community.

(Mr. von Arx, Switzerland)

In our intervention last year, my country welcomed the recommendations of the group of experts on ways and means of improving transparency in international transfers of conventional armaments. Since then, thanks to the continued efforts of the Committee, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/36 H and, in accordance with paragraph 8 of that resolution, the Secretary-General, with the assistance of governmental experts, has worked out the technical details for implementing such measures. It is my pleasure to announce that, beginning in the spring, my country will contribute to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We decided to do so since we consider the Register a first important step in an area in which international cooperation must be further improved in the future. My country supports all efforts aimed at achieving a better harmonization of existing norms and rules governing international transfers of war materials.

The successes of disarmament negotiations contrast sharply with the persistence and violence of ongoing armed conflicts worldwide. Europe, which has barely liberated itself from the spectre of totalitarianism, is once again confronted with the horrors of war. The resulting suffering is difficult to understand because we thouqht that conflicts such as these were a thing of the past. On battlefields in Europe and elsewhere even the most basic principles of humanitarian law are violated repeatedly. As a party to the Geneva Conventions and as its depositary State, Switzerland makes an urgent appeal to the conscience and responsibility of all parties to these armed conflicts. We urge them not only to respect the principles of humanitarian law but also to promote respect for them. The international community cannot tolerate a situation in which principles that represent an achievement of civilization

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are violated with impunity. My country urges all Governments to ensure strict observance of the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols, to renew their efforts to enforce them, to contribute to their dissemination among the armed forces, and to support the International Committee of the Red Cross in its endeavours to ensure world-wide respect for humanitarian law.

Allow me to say in conclusion that the Government of Switzerland is both surprised and sad to have to raise this issue with such insistence at a time when there is such serious hope for a new era in international cooperation. The atrocities committed on many battlefields leave us no choice but to reinforce our commitment to greater respect for humanitarian law.

Mr. ABU ODEH (Jordan): As I am addressing the Committee for the first time at this session, may I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Elaraby on his election. My delegation is very pleased that a person with his impressive qualifications is presiding over our deliberations.

May I also extend my warm congratulations to the officers of the Committee and welcome the delegations of the new Member States that are joining the Committee for the first time this year. May I assure the Committee of my delegation's full cooperation and express the hope that we will achieve success in our work.*

Since the last session of the Committee many changes have occurred that have had a profound effect on international peace and security. With the demise of the cold war and the end of East-West confrontation, arms control and disarmament, although not easy to achieve, have, for the first time, become

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* The Chairman returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Abu Odeh, Jordan)

possible and compatible with reality. On the bilateral level there have been some encouraging developments in the relations between the United States and the Russian Federation. They have ratified the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START Treaty), and further reductions in their strategic nuclear arsenals are, we hope on the way.

These developments as well as others, such as the recent accession by China, France and South Africa to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), undoubtedly represent positive steps towards the ultimate goal of a nuclear-free world. While welcoming these positive developments on the global level, Jordan would like to join in calling upon all States that possess nuclear and/or other weapons of mass destruction to do their utmost to rid the world of such weapons.

In the hope of achieving the complete prohibition of all nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, Jordan has always adhered to the letter and spirit of the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations and to all relevant instruments of international law. In the forefront of these instruments is the NPT. Jordan believes that, without full accession and complete adherence to the NPT by all States with nuclear capabilities, the danger of nuclear proliferation will remain and that the whole world will suffer accordingly.

In the Middle East, where the situation is highly volatile and where the threat to international peace and security needs no further corroboration, a nuclear State still refrains from acceding to the NPT. To this day, Israel

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still denies the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) any access to its nuclear facilities. That alone, aside from the fact that it leaves considerable amounts of fissionable materials unchecked, could invite other States in the region to do the same.

As we are all aware, agenda item 64, concerning Israeli nuclear armament, is not a new item on the agenda. It has been there for many years. If anything, its inclusion again this year indicates the failure of Israel to fulfil the requirements of that item. Israel has not so far responded in a positive way to the Security Council's call to place its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards. We are not fond of repeating this call to Israel but we respect our responsibility towards our peoples and towards the principles of the Charter, which require us to work sincerely and seriously for the promotion of international peace and security.

(Mr. Abu Odeh, Jordan)

In today's world, national security cannot be achieved through the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. The development, stockpiling and transfer of such weapons can only foster the sense of insecurity and eventually accelerate the arms race, and thus endanger international peace and security. International peace and security can be achieved only through the concerted efforts of the whole international community aiming at the attainment of collective security.

We in Jordan believe that pending the attainment of the goal of a nuclear-free world denuclearization should take place on the regional level in all parts of the world. We therefore welcome and support all efforts leading to the establishment of nuclear-free zones. While efforts have been successful in some regions, like Latin America, we look forward to the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East. Jordan welcomes and fully supports all initiatives towards the achievement of that objective. We hope that the ongoing peace talks on the Middle East will both further this goal and be guided by it. Putting an end to the development, stockpiling and transfer of arms in the region is undoubtedly one of the most significant confidence-building measures. In this context, it is both logical and practical to believe that the first step towards confidence-building between the parties to the Middle East conflict will be a positive response by Israel to the will of the international community by placing its nuclear facilities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This will certainly pave the way for other positive developments towards the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. It should be kept in mind, however, that the arms race in the Middle East is a matter of the greatest concern when it comes to weapons of mass destruction. It is in the first

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place the responsibility of all States in the region to eliminate that source of threat to international peace and security. The establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East would not only contribute to confidence-building in the region but also help create a climate conducive to comprehensive and durable peace.

We consider the recent finalization of the draft Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons as a great achievement. It is indeed a positive step towards a world free of all weapons of mass destruction. May I take this opportunity to express my delegation's deep appreciation of the efforts made by Ambassador Adolf Ritter von Wagner, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons of the Conference on Disarmament. I should also like to thank him and the members of the Ad Hoc Committee for the report in this regard presented to the First Committee on 13 October 1992. However, looking at the projected treaty from a Middle Eastern perspective, we find that handling chemical weapons in isolation from all weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, is insufficient. We in Jordan share with other States in the region the view that what is lacking is a comprehensive and indiscriminate treaty banning all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We hope that the multilateral peace talks in which my country is participating will take this into consideration and we aspire to reach a point when all countries of the region join the chemical weapons Convention and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Expenditure on armaments has over the years become a great burden on national economies. If the time is now ripe for disarmament, it is definitely high time that this drain should stop. Happily enough, this is being felt not only by developing countries but also by industrialized nations. Disarmament

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and economic and social development are interrelated. We hope that a considerable part of the resources that have for a long time been devoted to armaments will now be transferred to economic and social development. If international peace and security is the ultimate goal of humanity, economic and social development should be the right path through which peace is achieved. Let us hope that the future world will be nuclear-free, environmentally clean, and economically and socially prosperous.

The CHAIRMAN: A number of delegations have approached me concerning an extension of the deadline for submission of draft resolutions under disarmament agenda items. The Bureau of the First Committee has reviewed the matter, and as a result I should like to suggest an extension of the deadline until Friday, 30 October, at 5 p.m. in order to enable the delegations concerned successfully to conclude their consultations. I would appeal to all delegations that are involved in negotiations on draft resolutions to make every possible effort to conclude them and submit the draft resolutions as soon as possible. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that this proposal meets with the Committee's approval.

It was so decided.

Mr. KAMUNANWIRE (Uganda): At the outset I wish, on behalf of the delegation of Uganda to congratulate you most warmly, Ambassador Elaraby, and, through you, the other members of the Bureau on your election to your respective offices. Given your experience and diplomatic skills, I am confident that you will successfully steer the deliberations of the Committee. I wish also to express our appreciation to Ambassador Mroziewicz, the outgoing Chairman, who guided the Committee's work at the forty-sixth session, for a job well done.

(Mr. Kamunanwire, Uganda)

The ending of the cold war has ushered in a promising period of transition for the world. The relaxation of tension between the major Powers has facilitated progress in the search for solutions to many crisis situations in which the United Nations is playing a critical role. The new atmosphere in international relations has thus given us renewed hope of constructing a new world peace, common security and sustainable development. The process of arms control and arms reductions has gained momentum.

There are, however, many risks and uncertainties that still cast a dark shadow on the promises of this transition. The tragic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia and elsewhere which are rooted in ethnic, racial, religious and other sectarian prejudices are a tragic reminder of the great obstacles we yet have to overcome in our quest for a more secure and stable world. The intensity of these conflicts and their destructive consequences have no doubt been aggravated by the huge stocks of arms that are readily made available to the protagonists.

It is now accepted that the concept of security embraces non-military threats. Thus, equally destabilizing for international peace and security is the condition of squalour and deprivation in which the overwhelming majority of the world's population finds itself. We live in a world divided between an oasis of plenty and affluence on the one hand and a desert of massive poverty and deprivation on the other. This is well reflected by the ever-increasing gap between the North and the South. If our vision of a better and equitable new world order is to be realized, it becomes imperative to address these problems as a priority.

(Mr. Kamunanwire, Uganda)

The agenda for development is as important as - and is inescapably linked to - the Agenda for Peace. The United Nations must give the two agendas equal priority and address them in tandem. I need not, therefore, overemphasize the relationship between disarmament and development. The architecture and management of the new order should he comprehensive enough to serve equitably world peace and the security and development of all Member States.

The United Nations must be at the centre of disarmament and arms control efforts, as that facilitates the participation of all Member States. For some time, disarmament negotiations, especially in the nuclear fields, have been carried out mainly between the super-Powers, with the United Nations playing a peripheral role. Yet the dangers posed by nuclear weapons and the outcome of those bilateral negotiations affect the security of all of us. Accordingly, it is crucial that all countries participate in the disarmament process. The bilateral effort should be complementary to, and not a substitute for, multilateral negotiations. It is essential to strengthen the multilateral approach. The Conference on Disarmament was created specifically to be the major United Nations forum for negotiations in the area of disarmament. That role needs to be enhanced and the membership of the Conference on Disarmament revised so that it can be fully representative of the United Nations membership and reflect present-day political realities. Uganda welcomes the consultations which the President of the Conference is carrying out in this regard. We believe, however, that the General Assembly should send a clear message that the present anomalies should be rectified. The agenda of the Conference also needs to be refocused on items of contemporary urgency.

I commend the Conference on Disarmament for successfully completing the negotiations on the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development,

(Mr. Kamunanwire, Uganda)

Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons. The draft Convention, which has been submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session for adoption, is a significant landmark in the disarmament process. It bans an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. The draft Convention is unique in that it is global, comprehensive and verifiable. It provides for an effective regime to prevent the proliferation of chemical weapons and for sanctions against those countries that violate its provisions. The draft Treaty sets a useful precedent that should provide a model and guidelines in the current negotiations on the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction that still haunt the world, including, inter alia, nuclear and biological weapons. Uganda is of the view that the draft Convention on chemical weapons should be used to facilitate - rather than become an excuse to erect roadblocks to - the legitimate interests of developing countries to acquire and have access to technology in the chemical field for purposes of economic development and for other peaceful applications.

The executive committee to be established under the Convention will play an important role in monitoring its implementation. That committee should be democratic and transparent in its operations, and all States parties should be given an equal opportunity to serve. We support the draft Convention, and we look forward to being among its first signatories.

We are glad that the momentum for disarmament has continued to increase. Last year we welcomed the Treaty between the United States of America and Russia in which they agreed to reduce substantially their arsenals of strategic weapons. In June this year the United States and the Russian Federation agreed to further reductions in their nuclear arsenals. We are encouraged by this trend. I wish, however, to point out that the gains

(Mr. Kamunanwire, Uganda)

attained through those reductions will be negated if the weapons that are being cast away are replaced with a new generation of qualitatively better and more advanced weapons systems. These can be equally destabilizing. It is essential, therefore, for the disarmament effort to be extended to research and to the development of new weapons systems.*

While welcoming the progress registered, I wish to stress that our objective remains the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, with priority being given to complete nuclear disarmament. The moratorium on testing announced by France, the Russian Federation and the United States of America should create a positive atmosphere. It should serve as an impetus for making progress in the negotiations for a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty and for general and complete disarmament. The question of verification has been one of the contentious issues with regard to a comprehensive test-ban treaty. But the problems are not insurmountable. The proposals submitted by Sweden in this regard provide a basis for making further progress.

The Review Conference to consider whether the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) should be extended will take place in 1995. A number of speakers in this debate have already expressed the wish to have the Treaty extended indefinitely. At this session the General Assembly will set in motion the preparatory arrangements for the Review Conference. Uganda, as a State party to the NPT, intends to participate actively both in the preparatory arrangements and in the Conference itself. Our objective will be to strengthen the Treaty and to remove the present

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* Mr. Patokallio (Finland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. Kamunanwire, Uganda)

imbalances. Apart from preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Treaty should be part and parcel of the strategy for achieving the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. An important aspect of the Treaty should be the promotion of the peaceful application of nuclear energy and the transfer of technology in that regard. Emphasis on the Treaty's safeguards regime should go hand in hand with increased assistance to developing countries in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. This includes, inter alia, the application of nuclear energy for agriculture, medicine and power. The developing countries should not be left to lag behind in this field. Africa is one of the regions that is lagging behind in this area. The African Regional Seminar on the Peaceful Application of Nuclear Energy held at Kampala in 1989 made useful proposals which need to be followed up.

Uganda has always maintained that outer space is the common heritage of mankind, and that its exploration should be for peaceful purposes only and in the interests of all mankind. We are of the view that space law should be developed to catch up with the present political and technological realities by banning the introduction of all weapons systems into outer space. There should be a halt to the research and development of such weapons systems.

(Mr. Kamunanwire, Uganda)

Last year the General Assembly adopted a resolution establishing a United Nations Register on Conventional Arms. A Register has now been established, and a panel of experts has submitted a report on the technical procedures for the implementation of the Register and modalities for its expansion. Uganda will examine positively the proposals that are before the Committee in this regard. We agree that the massive acquisition of conventional arms can be destablizing and that they are the ones being used in many of the present regional conflicts.

The Register can be a useful tool as a confidence-building measure among nations by improving transparency. However, we maintain our position that the Register ought to be more comprehensive and non-discriminatory and should encompass development, production, stockpiling and state-of-the-art weapons technology. We believe that, as long as production and development continue at cold-war levels, the search for markets, and hence increased transfers, will also continue. Furthermore the Register should not, in our view, be used as another measure or yet another conditionality for economic assistance when countries try to meet their legitimate security needs.

As I have indicated, disarmament and arms reduction, at both the national and the international levels, is very much related to development. Security and stability are a prerequisite for development, while on the other hand reduction in military expenditure releases resources for developmental activities.

When the national resistance movement took over power in Uganda, after the defeat of the previous oppressive regimes, the army was expanded to combat insecurity, and it carried out police duties as the civilian police had

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collapsed. With peace and security restored, and having trained better civilian police, the Uganda Government has embarked on a programme of scaling down the size of the army to an adequate level which the economy can support and yet is sufficient to meet our security needs. The demobilization exercise will be carried out in such a way that those affected are properly reintegrated into civilian life.

It remains our hope that at the internationa level the resources being released by disarmament can also be applied for development assistance. We have yet to see, at the international level, the peace dividend materializing in this way.

In his "Agenda for peace" and in his annual report, the Secretary-General has underscored the role of regional organizations and regional groupings in the promotion of the resolution of conflicts. In our own region, Uganda is committed to dialogue in order to further the resolution of problems and to promote mutual confidence. Through joint commissions with neighbouring countries, and within the framework of regional and subregional groupings, it has been possible to put in place confidence-building measures and to enhance mutual cooperation in all spheres. We believe the relaxation of tension or disarmament at the multilateral level can be underpinned by those regional efforts. The regional disarmament centres should be able to play a useful role in this regard.

Once again I wish to stress the need for all countries to participate in the disarmament process. Tne United Nations can assist developing countries by enhancing our capability for effective participation through training. In this connection I commend the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme for its invaluable contribution. Uganda has been a beneficiary of this

(Mr. Kamunanwire, Uganda)

Programme. We can attest that its graduates have been most useful in our appreciation of disarmament problems and issues.

I wish to express our appreciation to Nigeria, which initiated the proposal for the establishment of this Programme. We call for the expansion of the Fellowship Programme and call on Member States to augment their financial and material contributions to this noble cause. This would not only help in the disarmament campaign, but would also help all of us to have informed participation in disarmament negotiations. Needless to say, this would facilitate an appreciation of the negotiated Treaties and speed up their implementation.

Mr. ZAHRAN (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. Chairman, I should like to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau and to wish you every success.

I seize this opportunity to extend my sincerest thanks and appreciation to all those delegations that have expressed their noble feelings and their solidarity with us over the tragedy that has befallen the Egyptian people in terms of loss of life and the destruction of property as a result of the recent earthquake.

The meetings of this Committee acquire more importance in view of the rapid and successive international political developments which have had a tangible positive effect on certain areas of disarmament. We hope that the effects of this favourable international political climate will have a similar positive effect on the multilateral disarmament negotiations at the international and the regional levels.

Egypt's priorities in the field of disarmamert are consonant with those outlined by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

disarmament, held in 1978. There, nuclear weapons were accorded the highest priority on the list of weapons that should be eradicated. In this context, Egypt welcomes the positive agreement signed between Washington and Moscow in 1991 and 1992, which resulted in significant reductions in the area of nuclear weapons, as well as the decisions of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on reducing armamaments and the most recent arrangements regarding European security.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

We call upon the other nuclear States to take steps in the same direction and thereby to move towards freeing the world from nuclear weapons. Hence, our welcome for the accession by France, China, South Africa and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). While we welcome the decision by France, the Russian Federation and the United States to freeze nuclear testing temporarily, we hope that this step will lead to the conclusion of an international convention on the complete prohibition of all types of nuclear tests.

We had hoped that such important developments would be reflected in the multilateral negotiations, in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, with regard to all items related to nuclear disarmament and included on the agenda of the Conference, and would do so with the same degree of positiveness. However, the Conference has not been able to achieve any tangible progress in addressing the nuclear items. The previous well-known positions of various groups which had always prevented the Conference on Disarmament from achieving progress on those items were restated at the Conference's 1992 session as is shown in the report before the General Assembly.

Undoubtedly the absolute priority that the Conference accorded this year to the conclusion of negotiations on the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction should not be regarded as a precedent for the work of the Conference in future sessions - especially so in light of the importance that some delegations attach to the need to focus on the item "Transparency in Armaments".

Egypt considers it extremely important that a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty be concluded as soon as possible. Therefore, we

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

express our regret at the failure of all efforts exerted within the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish a nuclear-test-ban Ad Hoc Committee in spite of the flexibility shown by the overwhelming majority of the Group of 21 - the neutral and non-aligned countries - with regard to the Committee's negotiating mandate and the formulation of an improved work programme.

Here, I should like to reiterate our deep conviction that a comprehensive nuclear-test ban would be an important and major step towards halting the vertical nuclear-arms race. It would also be an important step that would have a pronounced effect on the preparation for the next NPT Review Conference, which will take place in 1995 and even on the future of the Treaty itself. It should be recalled that the inability of the Fourth Review Conference to adopt a final declaration was due to the failure to reach agreement on a comprehensive test-ban treaty along the lines of the objectives of the NPT.

Since the first use of the atomic bomb the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons has been a fearful prospect that terrorized peaceful nations which have renounced the nuclear option and sought to strengthen their national security alongside their socio-economic development. For that reason, the General Assembly adopted a series of resolutions repeating the international community's call for priority to be given to the conclusion of an international treaty banning the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. The latest of those resolutions was number 46/36 L. Regrettably, as has happened before, this year's endeavours to establish a subcommittee to work for the desired international agreement in the Conference on Disarmament failed.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

The issue of guaranteeing the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons is a high priority issue among regional and international security questions which preoccupy Egypt and other non-nuclear-weapon States alike. In view of the fact that the NPT did not address the issue, Egypt and the other non-nuclear-weapon States have asked that this lacuna should be dealt with and redressed. Unfortunately, Security Council resolution 255 (1968) fell short of making adequate provision for comprehensive security guarantees to the non-nuclear-weapon States, particularly on the negative side. If we take into account the fact that Security Council resolution 255 (1968) was adopted under international circumstances that were completely different from those pertaining in today's world, we can see that it is crucial that the needs of the non-nuclear-weapon States be met urgently through the adoption by the Security Council of a new resolution that reinforces and adds to the pledges given in resolution 255 (1968) for the purpose of giving further assurance to the non-nuclear-weapon States and in a manner that is compatible with the new international political climate.

We need a Security Council resolution that: first, guarantees the deterrence of any use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons by the States possessing nuclear capabilities and technologies that are not subject to international control; secondly, makes provision for action in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter in any case of the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear-weapon State; thirdly, provides for the imposition of sanctions against States parties or non-parties to the NPT that use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear-weapon State; and fourthly, includes a comprehensive and

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clear definition of the technical, scientific, financial and humanitarian assistance that must be urgently provided to any non-nuclear-weapon State that is made the target of the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

Egypt has consistently put forward proposals for strengthening Security Council resolution 255 (1968) and has presented working papers in many international forums, such as the General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament and the fourth Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, through which Egypt tried to contribute to solving a question that is vital and important to the security and stability of all non-nuclear-weapon States. I reiterate once again here our view that it is necessary to arrive at a legally binding declaration as soon as possible in order to guarantee the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. We also reaffirm our readiness to effectively contribute to the attainment of this objective.

The importance of regional disarmament is being confirmed day after day, not only as a confidence-building measure and an effective means of halting the arms race, but also as an effective means of guaranteeing the security, stability and prosperity of States. Egypt has been aware of this fact since it announced in conjunction with Iran, its initiative to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East in 1974. That proposal was followed, in 1990, by President Mubarak's initiative to free the Middle East region of all weapons of mass destruction, be they nuclear, chemical or biological.

At this point, I should like to confirm our full and faithful readiness to cooperate with and to understand any serious and constructive scheme or proposal that would contribute to freeing the Middle East of all causes of destruction, while providing for all States of the region equal and balanced security. On the same grounds, we support and encourage the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa and the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace in various regions of the world as a necessary step towards general and complete disarmament.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

In the context of a regional approach to disarmament, I should like to draw attention to the ongoing multilateral talks on arms limitation in the Middle East that followed the Madrid Peace Conference. Egypt has been and will continue to be actively involved in those talks by virtue of its support for the peace process with the aim of achieving a durable and just peace in the Middle East. We are convinced that addressing the whole gamut of disarmament issues in these talks and negotiations will contribute to reaching a common understanding concerning confidence-building and to agreement on the ways and means of eliminating the threat posed to the region by the stockpiling of armaments. At the forefront of these issues is the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. It is our hope that these talks will enhance and support the objectives of the peace process and make it possible to reach a just and comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem.

This year, the Conference on Disarmament has accorded the highest priority to the item on chemical weapons in view of the conclusion of the draft Convention in accordance with the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. In view of the importance attached by Egypt to the prohibition of developing, producing, stockpiling and using all weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear, chemical or biological, Egypt participated actively in all stages of the consultations, deliberations and negotiations on the draft Convention over the past years, and particularly during the final stages of negotiations. We concur with the view that it was rather difficult, if not impossible, to arrive at a Convention that satisfies all. However, we are convinced that it could have been possible, with a measure of understanding and political will, to improve some of the provisions

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

and stipulations of the draft Convention and thereby satisfy the principal security requirements of all States, particularly those of developing countries, so that the Convention may not hinder nor obstruct their economic and technological development or the development of their peaceful civil chemical industries.

Although Egypt, like many other States of the Group of 21 and China, found it necessary to put forward in the course of negotiations several amendments and remarks, most of which were of a vital nature as they related to the security and prosperity of developing countries, Egypt did not object to putting the draft Convention on chemical weapons before the General Assembly for consideration. In a gesture of good will, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt declared in his statement before this session of the General Assembly that we support the progress towards chemical disarmament within the framework of an international Convention that would constitute an integral part of an evolving and comprehensive disarmament process, particularly with relation to weapons of mass destruction. Egypt also declared that, from the regional standpoint, it did not believe in dealing with this Convention in isolation from other international efforts relating to the rest of weapons of mass destruction, especially the NPT, the safeguards and international inspections regime and the provision of credible international guarantees, in addition to the prohibition of biological weapons.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

This position of Egypt's is in consonance with the unified Arab position adopted by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Arab League at their meeting in Cairo last September. In more detail, the Egyptian position on the draft Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, as stated by its Minister of Foreign Affairs, is as follows: first, complete readiness to deal with all effective disarmament proposals which would provide for security through equal mandatory commitments that are applicable to all States in the region without distinction; secondly, full and complete support for freeing the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction - nuclear, chemical and biological - as that is the best means of ensuring security for all States in the region; thirdly, complete readiness to deal with the Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons within the context of the efforts aiming at the establishment of the said mass-destruction-weapons-free zone provided that Israel responds positively to the international calls addressed to it to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and agrees to place all its nuclear facilities under the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); fourthly, support for the Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons within an integral disarmament process at the regional level with a view to maintaining the security of the States in the Middle East which are threatened by the existence of nuclear weapons in the possession of one of the States of the region without any international control or legal obligations in this respect.

In addition, the Security Council could also study the feasibility of providing comprehensive security guarantees to deter the use or threat of use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons by any State against any State party to the NPT, the chemical-weapons Convention or the biological-weapons Convention.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

In recent years, several States have expressed interest in taking up the matter of conventional weapons limitation and many initiatives and proposals to control this type of armament have been put forward. As a result, resolution 46/36 L, entitled "Transparency in Armaments", was adopted by the General Assembly. From the beginning, Egypt was keen to confirm that confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons must be adopted in the context of an opportune political climate and within the framework of an integrated process to reduce tension at the regional level. That is why the full implementation of transparency in armaments in the Middle East must be achieved on the basis of progress in the process aiming at establishing a comprehensive and just peace.

The Egyptian position regarding the Register of Conventional Arms Transfers is based on fundamental principles which we consider to be an essential cornerstone of justice and the security of the region at the minimum level of armaments. These principles are crystallized in the concept of transparency. However, this transparency should not be limited to conventional weapons but should embrace all categories of weapons and should be applied to all States equally in a parallel and balanced manner. This requires that the scope of the Register should be expanded to include the components of all categories of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems as well as transfers of the technology used in the production of such weapons. It is just as important that the Register should contain data about national production, stockpiles and the operations of arms deliveries and stockpiling in the framework of bilateral or regional agreements.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

I was privileged to be elected a Special Coordinator of the Conference on Disarmament to conduct informal consultations on that subject and perhaps establish an ad hoc committee during the forthcoming session of the Conference. Without going into the details of the ideas that were put forward during the informal consultations at the last session, as contained in the report of the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly, I should like to draw attention to two important considerations that would facilitate the Conference's deliberations on this question during the coming sessions:

First, it is important to dissipate the ambiguity of certain ill-defined expressions which were included in resolution 46/36 L, in order to avoid future differences over their interpretation in the Conference. For example, for "military holdings" (resolution 46/36 L, para. 12) and "procurement through national production", (ibid.) a number of interpretations were given because of their ambiguity. The Conference on Disarmament report contained a reference to the need to avoid such ambiguity, and doubts were voiced by a number of delegates.

Secondly, it is important to align the date set in operative paragraph 11 of resolution 46/36 L for receipt by the Secretary-General of the views of Member States on the Register, namely 30 April 1994 with the deadline set for the Conference on Disarmament to complete its consideration of this question, in order for the Conference on Disarmament to benefit from the Secretary-General's report and the views of the Member States in drawing up its report for presentation to the General Assembly. This will not be possible before the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, that is in 1995.

Egypt notes with satisfaction the contribution of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) at its 1992 session by concluding its work on

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

one of its main agenda items, namely, "Objective information on military matters". This is a step of importance which will help to advance the deliberations of the Conference on Disarmament in 1993 on the item "Transparency in armaments". This progress indicates the Commission's ability to achieve meaningful and tangible progress in relation to the other items remaining on the agenda of the UNDC for 1993. However, we must mention here a certain overlapping of work and deliberations of the UNDC and certain items on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, particularly the items relating to nuclear weapons.

In the area of international efforts to halt the arms race, this year has witnessed the convening of the Second Review Conference for the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Uses of Environmental Modification Techniques (ENMOD). Egypt attaches importance to this Convention, since it is one way of preventing the extension of the arms race to the environment, the common heritage of humanity.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

Discussions in the Second Review Conference have brought to light several points of weakness in the provisions of the Convention, especially in relation to the scope of the prohibition in Article I, the definition in Article II and the verification and compliance mechanisms provided for in Article V. Briefly, Egypt believes that in order to strengthen the provisions of the Convention and to increase its effectiveness as one of the measures of preventing the extension of the arms race, there is a need for focusing in the future on the following elements:

First: underscoring the flexibility in the text of Article II of the Convention, since the phenomena listed in the definition of the modification techniques cannot be considered a full and updated inventory that keeps pace with rapid modern technological developments in today's world;

Secondly, due care should be taken to implement the principle of transparency in exchanging information regarding all scientific and technological developments and the areas of research and development, whether they concern peaceful or hostile modifications of the environment. In this connection, the Register, which was established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/36 L, should be expanded to include techniques of environment modification that could be used for military purposes or other hostile acts;

Thirdly, the clarification of the limits of international responsibility as related to the purposes and objectives of the Convention, particularly in the case of using environment modification techniques for purposes of hostilities in areas outside the limits of a State's jurisdiction stipulated in Article IV of the Convention, such as the high seas, areas outside the territorial waters or in outer space;

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

Fourthly, due attention should be given to reinforcing the system of verification and monitoring of compliance with the provisions of the Convention as stipulated in Article V, bearing in mind that there are members of the Security Council, under whose jurisdiction this falls, who are not parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Environment Modification Techniques for Military Purposes or any other Hostile Purposes (ENMOD); and

Fifthly, confirmation that the dumping of nuclear, chemical and other toxic wastes in the territories of developing countries is an act of environment modification prohibited by the Convention.

For these reasons, my delegation supports the proposal of calling upon the Advisory Committee, in accordance with Article V of the Convention, to study and clarify the scope of the Convention's provisions and their implementation in the interests of mutual confidence.

I must also stress Egypt's interest in preventing the extension of the arms race into outer space, and its eagerness to contribute to all efforts aimed at strengthening and supporting the legal regime applicable to outer space in order to increase its effectiveness, in compliance with all multilateral Conventions, and to support confidence-building and transparency measures in this important field. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament will continue to consider this item in the Ad Hoc Committee established for this purpose with an adequate mandate for that purpose during its 1993 session.

The issues of halting the arms race and of disarmament in general and in all aspects, deserve the great interest shown by the international community. I would therefore like to commend the Secretary-General's report distributed to the Committee on the occasion of Disarmament Week entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" (A/C.1/47/7).

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

As the Secretary-General stated, the report complements the "Agenda for Peace" which was presented last June at the request of the Security Council Summit Meeting of 31 January 1992 in order to rationalize United Nations efforts in the area of disarmament.

We have to consider the complementarity and coordination between all efforts currently being exerted in all international forums to achieve general and complete disarmament, whether through the negotiating mandate of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva or the deliberative mandate of the Disarmament Commission in New York. This requires further rationalization and coordination between the deliberations of the Commission and the Conference to avoid any duplication and to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations in this field.

In the light of past experience of United Nations deliberations on disarmament matters, we call upon all the States Members of the Organization to cooperate in the implementation of all the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly with a view to the democratization of international relations and to the upholding of the will of the international community which is embodied in all those resolutions.

Mr. KAPSOS (Cyprus): I would like first to extend our warmest congratulations to Mr. Nabil Elaraby on his assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. My delegation is confident that his reputation, diplomatic skills and extensive experience, as well as those of the other officers of the Committee, will be instrumental in ensuring the success of our important work.

The developments of the last two years, with the end of the cold war and the new-found cooperation and improved relations between the two nuclear

(Mr. Kapsos, Cyprus)

super-Powers, have revolutionized global security concepts. International security, both as a concept and as an imperative, has taken on added dimensions in the evolving world. The international community is presented with new challenges together with new opportunities. The old world order, based on the concept of deterrence and the spectre of nuclear annihilation, is withering away, replaced by a new state of affairs in which we are witnessing increased ccoperation between old adversaries and a tendency to reach consensus decisions, especially within the framework of international organizations.

Nowhere has this new-found spirit manifested itself in clearer form than in the attitude of the international community to the central role of the United Nations in international relations. There is increasing recognition that democracy and international security can only be achieved by elevating the United Nations and the purposes and principles its Charter espouses to the front line of international relations. An example of the increasing respect for and reliance on the United Nations is the growing recognition that the peaceful settlement of disputes must be the epicentre round which relations between States revolve.

(Mr. Kapsos, Cyprus)

The nature of conflict in the new international system is also changing. As the global military threat associated with the existence of the two military blocs during the cold war has receded, the tragic events and conflicts which are occurring in newly created States following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia are bringing new urgency to the need for regional security arrangements. The availability of huge stocks of conventional weapons created a new instability in relations between various actors on the international scene, fuelling new conflicts with terrible material destruction and loss of human lives. Unfortunately, not only conventional but nuclear weapons as well remain beyond any centralized control.

In this respect Cyprus believes that a multifaceted approach is required. One such approach must be increased efforts to control and gradually eliminate nuclear arsenals. This should be a priority issue of the international community, with the United Nations assuming a central role in that respect. The elimination of nuclear weapons should not be confined to discussions between those States that have a nuclear capability but should be addressed by the international community as a whole. An issue related to this is the danger posed by the spread of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear-weapon States.

A sound venue for controlling the spread of nuclear weapons is the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to which Cyprus is a State party. This delegation welcomes the recent ratification of the NPT by China and France, as well as the Lisbon nuclear non-proliferation Protocol in which Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, as provided in article V, state that they will adhere to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States parties.

(Mr. Kapsos, Cyprus)

On the issue of nuclear testing, Cyprus welcomes recent developments which have advanced the common goal of achieving a multilateral commitment to ban nuclear tests. It is believed that the unilateral moratoriums observed by the Russian Federation, France and the United States are important gestures in providing the momentum that will - it is hoped - lead to a total ban on nuclear testing. Towards this end, Cyprus unequivocally supports the strenuous efforts of the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, Mr. Ali Alatas, in his capacity as President of the Amendment Conference of the Moscow Treaty.

The tragic developments that are occurring in the former Yugoslavia and Somalia bring forth the urgency of regional disarmament. An effective way must be found to control transfers of conventional weapons. It is the strong belief of this delegation that the international community has to pursue more vigorously the concept of conventional disarmament on a regional scale in a way that will ensure confinement of regional conflicts and minimal loss of life and material destruction when such conflicts arise. The concept of demilitarization must be re-examined within the broader realm of international security and the new world order. Cyprus, a small State in a volatile region, has on a number of occasions declared its willingness to demilitarize in the quest of the Cypriot people to promote the cause of peace in the area and in the world as a whole. President George Vassiliou, in his recent speech before the General Assembly at this forty-seventh session, once again reiterated the readiness of the Republic of Cyprus to proceed with a total demilitarization of our country, thus freeing much-needed resources for social progress and economic development.

The United Nations is called upon to play the foremost role in attempting to defuse or pre-empt regional crises. As far as the Cyprus problem is

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concerned, the Secretary-General is actively involved in the current efforts to find a just and viable solution which will reunite the island and put an end to its continued division resulting from the Turkish invasion of 1974 and the subsequent occupation of 37 per cent of the area of Cyprus. This delegation sincerely hopes that the current trend of achieving negotiated solutions to long-festering international problems that pose a threat to international peace and security will, in the case of Cyprus, lead to the withdrawal of the Turkish troops from Cypriot soil, thus allowing the Cypriot people - Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots - to live together once again, as was the case in the past before "ethnic cleansing" policies were forcibly applied. In an era when the walls of division are being dismantled in most regions of the world, making continuing divisions of countries anachronisms and remnants of a confrontational past, the forcible and artificial division of Cyprus cannot remain an exception. The international community has, by and large, given a crystal-clear message that the world it is resolved to build will be devoid of such divisions, though there are very few of its members who have yet to commit themselves through their actions to this end.

In a world of ever-increasing interdependence, strengthened by modern technological achievements, security in a particular region cannot be seen in the limited context of its own geographical boundaries. This also applies to the Mediterranean and its proximity to Europe and the Middle East. The link between security in Europe and the Mediterranean, for example, was stated in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and in the CSCE follow-up meetings. Recognizing the existing security link mentioned above, the Republic of Cyprus has on earlier occasions joined other Mediterranean countries in calling for the establishment of a conference on security and cooperation in the

(Mr. Kapsos, Cyprus)

Mediterranean amongst the qualifying States in an effort to promote and enhance security and cooperation in the region. We therefore welcome the fact that support for such a conference is embraced by many countries of the region and that initiatives and efforts for greater cooperation are being undertaken.

This delegation wishes to take this opportunity to reiterate the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus to the promotion of the Mediterranean region as a zone of security, peace and cooperation, free from conflict and confrontation. My delegation also wishes to emphasize the imperative need - as stated in paragraph 8 of resolution 45/79 entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region", which was adopted without a vote - for "just and peaceful settlement of persistent problems in the region, for respecting and safeguarding the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all countries and peoples of the Mediterranean and for full adherence to the principles of non-use of force or threat of use of force and the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, in accordance with the Charter and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations". It is the express hope of the peace-loving people of Cyprus that the persistent conflicts and tensions that exist in the Mediterranean region, including that of the division of my own country, will, in this climate of dialogue and cooperation and of the recognition of the primacy of international law and the peaceful settlement of disputes, be resolved in accordance with the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter and the relevant resolutions.

Today, as perhaps never before, mankind is in a position to pursue the possibilities for creating a stable and peaceful world, finding itself as it does at the crossroads of history. The direction that it will choose to take

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will probably shape the course of history for decades to come. It is for these reasons that we look forward to a world of cooperation and coexistence, in which future generations will live in conditions of peace and prosperity, respect for the sovereignty and integrity of all States, both large and small. Undoubtedly, a solution to the Cyprus problem based on the above-mentioned principles poses a challenge inasmuch as it could serve as a prototype for other similar problems.

Mr. HOYOS (Austria): Pursuant to the first Austrian statement during the general debate in the First Committee, we should like to use this opportunity today to make a few remarks on a few specific issues that are on the Committee's agenda.

First, we should like to comment on agenda item 60, "Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons." The complete and universal prohibition of chemical weapons has been an important objective of Austrian policy for many years. As an active observer in Geneva, Austria participated in the efforts of the Conference on Disarmament to reach an agreement on the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction. The Austrian delegation contributed a number of working papers, particularly on such questions as the identification of "capable facilities" and on the problem of old chemical weapons. Austria was also one of the countries that offered to act as host to the headquarters of the new Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

We consider the agreement reached in Geneva on a global ban on chemical weapons to be one of the most encouraging developments in the field of disarmament and arms control. My delegation has already commended the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, and we also want to thank all those delegations whose dedicated and unsparing efforts during years of negotiations have secured this outstanding result.

Austria neither produces nor possesses chemical weapons - nor, indeed, any other weapons of mass destruction. We wholeheartedly welcome the draft Convention. Once adopted, that Convention will be the most complete disarmament agreement, totally eliminating chemical weapons in all their aspects within 10 years.

(Mr. Hoyos, Austria)

The rules of the Convention provide for the complete destruction not only of all chemical warfare agents but of production sites as well. They will also prevent the further development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, transfer and use - including preparation for use - of chemical weapons. Activities not prohibited under the Convention, such as chemical industries, will be subjected to a scrutinizing verification regime providing for comprehensive international monitoring, including declarations and on-site inspections. To resolve any questions concerning possible non-compliance, provision is made for short-notice, challenge inspections.

We believe that the consensus achieved on the draft Convention reflects a reasonable balance in the most intricate network of competing interests.

In order to fulfil the high expectations and prove itself a truly historic achievement in international disarmament and arms control efforts, the Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons will have to be a universal instrument. We therefore encourage all countries to support the Convention, to sign and ratify it as soon as possible and to adhere fully to its provisions.

In light of those considerations Austria has been an original sponsor of the relevant draft resolution (A/C/1.47/L.1) and is committed to becoming an original signatory of the Convention when it is be opened for signature early next year.

Let me now turn to agenda item 61 (c), "conventional disarmament," and agenda item 61 (m), "Conventional disarmament on a regional scale."

Conventional disarmament must be assessed in its global as well as in its regional context. The proliferation of conventional weapons and the expansion of the already existing conventional armories are brought about by

(Mr. Hoyos, Austria)

international arms transfers as well as by national procurement. During the cold war, huge quantities of conventional arms were transfered within regions as well at the global level. Arms exports, albeit on a slightly reduced scale, have been continued since the end of the cold war.

The most immediate efforts to control the future expansion of existing conventional arms stocks have to be concentrated on the limitation of arms transfers. A universal and non-discriminatory United Nations register for conventional arms transfers, once operational, will lead to transparency. We hope that, successively, it will also lead to a voluntary restraint in arms transfers.

In addition to controlling future proliferation of conventional arms we will have to take advantage of the prevailing international climate and enhance the process of real reductions in the field of conventional arms. This process has been successfully initiated on a regional level. As the report of the Secretary-General, "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold war era," states in its introduction:

"In the world's most heavily armed region - Europe - the process of conventional disarmament is gathering momentum." (A/C.1/47/7, para. 6)

In fact, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty), which was signed at Paris on 19 November 1990, is a landmark in post-war European history. After considerable delays in the ratification process of the Treaty, the States parties signed on 10 July 1992, on the fringes of the Helsinki summit meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), a Protocol in which they agreed to apply the CFE Treaty provisionally as from 17 July on. Thus, the reduction process of the five major weapon and equipment systems limited by the CFE Treaty has been initiated. That process should be completed within 40 months.

(Mr. Hoyos, Austria)

On 10 July 1992 the 29 States parties to the CFE Treaty also signed, in Helsinki, the Concluding Act of the Negotiation on Personnel Strength of Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the so-called CFE IA Concluding Act. This is a politically binding document by which those States decided to limit and, if applicable, reduce, on a national basis, the personnel strength of their conventional armed forces within the area of application. The full implementation of both the CFE Treaty and the CFE IA Concluding Act are of paramount importance for European security and stability.

Furthermore, during the course of last spring the negotiations on a new set of confidence- and security-building measures and the negotiations on an open skies regime were successfully concluded in Vienna. The Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures 1992 was adopted on 4 March and the Open Skies Treaty was signed on 24 March in Helsinki. All those agreements reflect the advantageous and new political situation prevailing in Europe.

The CSCE Helsinki Document 1992, which was adopted by the Heads of State or Government of the CSCE participating States on 10 July after four months of negotiations, is of considerable relevance for the future of security in Europe and the adjacent parts of Asia. In chapter V of the Helsinki Decision, the participating States agreed to establish a new CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation. That permanent Forum, which started its work in Vienna on 22 September, provides for new negotiations on arms control, disarmament and confidence- and security-building. It will also facilitate enhanced cooperation and dialogue in the field of security. The Vienna-based CSCE Conflict Prevention Centre is closely linked to these activities.

The negotiations on arms control, disarmament and confidence- and security-building will henceforth be carried out between all CSCE

(Mr. Hoyos, Austria)

participating States. As set out in the Programme for Immediate Action contained in the Helsinki Document, one of the priority tasks of the Forum for Security Cooperation will be the harmonization of obligations between the 29 CSCE States and the other CSCE participating States under the various existing instruments concerning arms control, disarmament and confidence- and security-building. Work with the aim of creating a common set of obligations among all CSCE participating States to facilitate future efforts to strengthen security and stability in Europe is already under way in Vienna.

The Programme for Immediate Action also foresees the possibility of regional measures, including, where appropriate, reductions and limitations. That provision will be relevant in addressing regional imbalances of conventional armed forces in the CSCE community of States. Proposals to set up such regional negotiation tables within the CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation have already been made in Vienna. One of those proposals envisages ways for dealing with the blatant imbalance of military forces in former Yugoslavia. Further proposals are expected to be submitted soon.

(Mr. Hoyos, Austria)

Despite serious disruptions of peace, and even open warfare in and between CSCE participating States, the Helsinki decisions have underlined the political will of the CSCE to address these very questions comprehensively. The implementation of agreements already concluded within the CSCE framework will lead to a balanced reduction of conventional forces in Europe.

Taking into account the Secretary-General's assessment in the report he issued on the occasion of Disarmament Week that

> "the relentless accumulation of armaments by States is not only a symptom of political tension; it can also cause and heighten such tensions and increase the risk of conflict", (A/C.1/47/7, para. 17)

my delegation hopes that the recent regional agreements in Europe will contribute effectively to prevent present and future conflicts from escalating and to eliminate, where possible, the root causes of tension.

Mr. SLOKENBERGS (Latvia): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee of the General Assembly. I also wish to offer my congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. I am confident that this year's session of the First Committee will, under your guidance, be a useful and constructive one. I offer you my full support in the important tasks facing this session. Latvia is taking part in its second regular session of the General Assembly. As Latvia continues on the road of restoring its independence, I hope that Latvia's support and participation will increase not only in the work of the First Committee but with respect to the work of all the components of the United Nations security and disarmament machinery.

(Mr. Slokenbergs, Latvia)

In his address to the General Assembly during the general debate, the Head of State of Latvia, Mr. Anatolijs Gorbunovs, stated that

"the security of small States should be a central concern of this Organization, since there does not exist a balance of power or agreement on goals between small States and their larger neighbours at this time". (A/47/PV.12, p. 7)

Whatever may be its goals, Latvia, for its part, recognizes its responsibility for observing United Nations legal standards in its relations with States and were we

"to fail in meeting our responsibilities, we would not excuse ourselves by reference to our limited political experience, nor to our economic problems. It is our hope that no State will use its size or its economic and military power as an excuse for ignoring United Nations standards." (ibid., p.8)

Mr. Chairman, as you aptly said in your introductory statement, the starting-point to meeting the challenges towards the maintenance of international peace and security is

"recognition by all States of the commonality of interests and the equality of rights and duties. That would make it possible to formulate and lay foundations of the norms and principles that should govern international relations now and in the future". (A/C.1/47/PV.3, p. 3)

That statement is of great importance, especially to small States. When a small State is faced with a threat to its security from a larger State, the former hopes that the international community will hold the latter accountable to this principle of equality of relations among States.

(Mr. Slokenbergs, Latvia)

In discussing the maintenance of peace and security between States, Latvia considers the Secretary-General's report "An agenda for peace" to be a document of great importance, in particular the parts on preventive diplomacy. The international community's timely recognition of tensions between States, followed by resolute action to head off an escalation of those tensions into conflict constitute the essence of preventive diplomacy. Unfortunately too often the international community responds too late to conflicts that, had they been addressed earlier, may have been avoidable. Fact-finding missions should be dispatched at a point in time before their members are likely to be subjected to gunfire from the opposing parties to the disputes being investigated.

Preventive diplomacy should not be the exclusive responsibility of the Secretary-General and the Security Council. Let us not forget that chapter IV of the Charter of the United Nations grants the General Assembly a role in determining and avoiding threats to international peace and security.

Another aspect of the Secretary-General's report that is of great importance to Latvia is cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements. In every dispute between States, the relevant regional body should be the forum of first instance for the dispute's resolution. But for every resolution of a dispute the United Nations should seek a complementary role.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) is a regional arrangement of great importance to Latvia. Latvia welcomes the recent decalaration that the CSCE is a regional arrangement in the sense of chapter VIII of the Charter and as such provides an important link between

(Mr. Slokenbergs, Latvia)

European and global security. Latvia also welcomes the establishment of the CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation.

Of particular importance to the security of Latvia and to all of Northern Europe is the CSCE's "Helsinki document 1992 - the challenges of change", adopted in July 1992. This document specifically addresses the problem of the foreign military forces which are illegally stationed in the Baltic States. The CSCE participating States called upon the States concerned, in line with basic principles of international law, and in order to prevent any possible conflict, to conclude, without delay, appropriate agreements, including timetables, for the early, orderly and complete withdrawal of such foreign military forces from the territories of the Baltic States.

While Latvia is in the process of negotiating the complete withdrawal of these military forces, there exists a lack of transparency as to the number of troops present, and little control over the movement of these troops and their weapons within Latvia. Further, any transfers of these weapons, be it to foreign Governments or to private parties, are outside the control of the authorities in Latvia. For example, these foreign military forces have recently sought to transfer submarines, outfitted in a naval base they control in Latvia, to third countries, in one case in violation of sanctions imposed by the Security Council. Also of concern to Latvia is the damage to the environment caused by these foreign military forces. Even now, Latvia is unable to negotiate payment for damages or even to begin remediation procedures because of lack of access to the polluted bases.

Latvia, together with Estonia and Lithuania, has requested that the issue of the complete withdrawal of foreign military forces be included in the

(Mr. Slokenbergs, Latvia)

agenda of the General Assembly. Although recognizing the action already taken by the CSCE and other regional organizations, Latvia's position is that bringing this issue to the United Nations is preventive, especially in light of breaches of the peace currently occurring in other parts of the former Soviet Union, in which the United Nations is involved.

As a further measure of early warning to a dispute that may lead to conflsict, Latvia has requested that United Nations observers attend bilateral negotiations on the complete withdrawal of foreign military forces from Latvia. It is Latvia's hope that parties to these negotiations will agree to the presence of United Nations observers, as this would provide both an expression of good will and a valuable indicator as to the potential for stability in the region and in Northern Europe as a whole.

It is Latvia's position that international security is inextricably linked with disarmament. Latvia welcomes the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction. Latvia supports the confidence-building measures included in the provisions of that Convention.

(Mr. Slokenbergs, Latvia)

Latvia welcomes, among other confidence-building measures, the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The Register will assist the process of regional disarmament. The cold war created concentrations of arms in the Balkans, as well as in the Baltic region. Stockpiles of conventional weapons remaining from the cold war pose a threat to the region, and that would be especially true if such weapons were to fall into the hands of those violently opposed to the re-establishment of an independent Latvia.

Latvia also recognizes its responsibility to contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. Noteworthy, in this regard, is Latvia's accession in 1991 to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Latvia - a small State - will continue, in the conduct of its international relations, to comply with United Nations legal standards. Latvia hopes that other States, large and small, will respect its right to continue to contribute to the peaceful development of international relations, as it did when it was a member of the League of Nations.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to 5 minutes for the second.

Mr. YUN (Republic of Korea): My delegation did not intend to intervene at this the final stage of the general debate. However, the reference this morning by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the question of the United Nations command in the Republic of Korea compels my delegation to clarify certain relevant facts.

(Mr. Yun, Republic of Korea)

To avoid any unnecessary argument on this issue - argument that is not relevant to our discussion - I should like to draw attention to the relevant provisions of the United Nations command's annual report to the Security Council, published last August as a Security Council document dated 15 June 1992.

First, the United Nations command was established by Security Council resolution 84 (1950), of 7 July 1950. Secondly, the Korean Armistice Agreement is purely military in nature. The commander-in-chief of the United Nations command signed that Agreement on behalf of all the forces - the forces of the 16 United Nations Member States and of the Republic of Korea - that fought under the United Nations flag. Thirdly, the admission of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations has no effect on the status of the United Nations command and does not change its role. The United Nations command will continue to perform an important peace-keeping role in the Republic of Korea, particularly in maintaining the Armistice, until an effective and enduring peace arrangement has been concluded through political dialogue between South Korea and North Korea - a process that is currently under way.

Having said that, my delegation wishes to point to the fact that the two Koreas have assented to article V of the Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-aggression and Exchanges and Cooperation, reached last year, which says:

> "The two sides shall endeavour together to transform the present state of armistice into a solid state of peace between the South and the North and shall abide by the present military Armistice Agreement until a state of peace has been realized."

(Mr. Yun, Republic of Korea)

My Government has already, on several occasions, including the occasion of our President's address to the General Assembly last year, proposed a durable peace arrangement between the parties directly concerned - South Korea and North Korea. My Government believes that if the two Koreas are able to agree to a peace arrangement to replace the Korean Armistice Agreement the question of the United Nations command will be resolved automatically.

Mr. LI (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): This morning my delegation emphasized that the end of the United Nations command in South Korea is one of the Korean issues to which the international community is giving its attention. Our position on this was stated this morning by our representative, and I have nothing further to say.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has thus concluded its general debate on all disarmament and international-security items.

As representatives are aware, the Committee will begin its second phase of work - consideration of draft resolutions under disarmament and international-security agenda items - tomorrow, Thursday, 29 October. Once again, therefore, I urge those delegations that wish to introduce draft resolutions or to comment on draft resolutions to inscribe their names to the list of speakers as soon as possible to enable the Committee to make full use of the conference facilities that are available.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.